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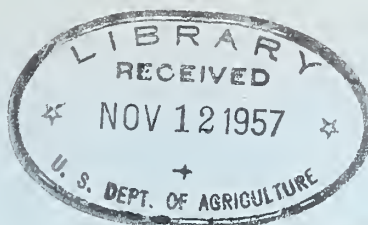
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Safer Saner Safety



by Seth Jackson
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Recently Bernard Anderson called a meeting of his staff to discuss a mighty important, and at times critical, situation in the Forest Service. This was the all-too-frequent illnesses of some of our employees - ulcers, or "Forest Service stomach," nervous breakdowns, yes, and even an occasional death from heart trouble. Andy said it was time to do something about it. I should say, do more about it, because these and other illnesses have long plagued us and we have tried to make manpower adjustments to take care of local illness situations. We have studied our statistics on such things, and find we are not out of line with country-wide trends. But Andy said he wanted a more vigorous action program. And he wanted me to do this job.

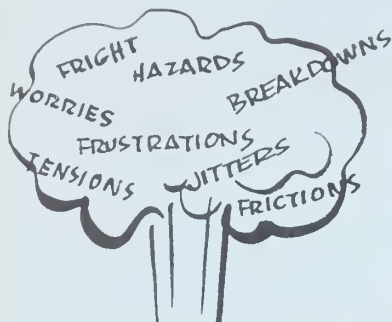
After the meeting, I thought about Andy's edict. I thought about what the other fellows said in that staff meeting. Surely whatever I could work up for the Forest Service would help our Servicewide Safety Program. An expanded Safer, Saner, Safety program is what is needed.

I would like to emphasize that Safer, Saner Safety first of all must have a substantial, sound, successful accident prevention program. That's basic. I would like to compliment you all on our progress in recent years. Our accident rates have been improving. True, some regions or stations are worse than others. This raises a logical question. Have these regions and stations fully accepted their responsibilities for full support and participation in accident prevention? Are you fully utilizing the various safety training aids and devices? Are you promoting the Turtle Club, wearing of safety shoes, shin guards for axe work? If your answers to these questions are no, then you have a job to do, even before you start an expanded Safer, Saner Safety.

Now, wait a minute. Maybe Safer, Saner Safety doesn't apply to us - or does it? I think it does. I am willing to wager that some of you will become physically incapacitated within the next year, perhaps for life, just because you are working too hard.

Let's analyze this a bit. Just why are we working too hard nowadays? Or is it working the wrong way? Old timers say hard work never killed anyone. Do we have the right pattern of work and play? Staffing? Do we delegate jobs to others enough and the right way? Just how does this tie in to safety? Just why should we do anything about it, anyway? Maybe it's the "price of progress."

I want to unqualifiedly state that the answer to this problem very definitely will affect your safety program. Why should we do anything about it? My answer to that is, why should we sit idly by and let our fellow workers and their families suffer needless suffering, expense - yes, and occasionally even death - just because we don't do anything about it; when by a simple 3-S program we can prevent a large share of the suffering, expense. Is it the price of progress? I certainly don't buy that theory. I hope you don't either. We all have a great stake in this program, if only to eliminate training of replacements for those knocked out, to prevent the loss of the tremendous amounts of money invested in training a person through the years, and then only to lose his abilities in the prime of his work life.



ATOMIC AGE

MILK BAR



MODERATION



EFFICIENCY



SUGGESTIONS

Bosh. Humbug. That's pure unadulterated mollicoddling, somebody might think. Well, let me tell you this: No employer has a more important obligation than the preservation of life, limb and the general well-being of his employees. No other investment he may make will bring greater returns than the money spent on Safer, Saner Safety. Put yourself in their position. You have everything to gain, nothing to lose. That is, if you want a profitable, happy bunch of people working for you.

In finding a solution to this problem we don't have to go back very far in our history. The machine age has speeded us up, and speeded up all of our activities and mental processes immeasurably this century. Wars - both hot and cold - have increased our tensions. The Atomic Age has multiplied our hazards and our worries far beyond the comprehension of the average man. Driving automobiles in these hectic times makes us jittery, especially when it's always "the other fellow" that knows so little about driving and occasionally runs into us or our loved ones.

Our fast, furious, fiendish flashy type of modern living today is fraught with frictions, fright, and frustrations. It's no wonder some of us get fevers and fall by the wayside.

My basic appeal in the expanded safety program can be summed up in one word - MODERATION. Does moderation mean we all should take it easier? If so, who's going to do the parts of our jobs which we will leave undone? I, for one, think we can be more moderate in all of our undertakings, and still get our jobs done, by striving for GREATER EFFICIENCY as we go about our daily tasks. Now, that certainly ties in to our safety programs, for safety and efficiency go hand in hand. An efficient operation is a safe operation, and vice versa.

How can we get greater efficiency in our operations? You will say, "It seems to me we are doing a lot with this already." We have made tremendous strides in this direction. But have we literally scraped the bottom of the barrel of efficiency, so to speak? I am sure we haven't.

Many of you are using the employee suggestion program to improve safety and efficiency. This sort of employee cooperation was brought home to me on an inspection trip out west this summer. I'll pick out only three of the many new ideas I saw, as possibilities you might want to use.

Item 1: I was on the Chequamegon in northern Wisconsin where I served as District Ranger. One crew had painted the toes of their safety boots with high visibility yellow paint to very effectively help to eliminate axe cuts on the feet. Question: Why didn't I think of that 20 years ago when we had that rash of axe accidents on my district?

Item 2: On an adjoining forest, some "wise guy" invented a heavy rubber band, like a seat belt, fastened from one side of his pickup to the other, below the seat, to hold his lunch box, portable radio, paint spray can, or what have you, so the job of driving could proceed more efficiently and safely.

Item 3: How many times have you wished for something upon which to put your notes when giving a safety talk? Here's a good idea developed by John Killebrew at the Forest Products Lab. A portable lectern for use at safety meetings.

Those are just three good, practical safety ideas out of many we are receiving in the Forest Service.



INSTRUCTION

Is your unit taking full advantage of the splendid opportunity for work improvement and greater job efficiency through employee suggestions? It doesn't take much stretch of the imagination to see how this helps us to prevent debilitating diseases, through a smoother running, more efficient, less accident-prone organization. It's a splendid opportunity to build up employee morale, too. Employees with high morale usually have fewer job frustrations, less worry, better mental health, less breakdowns, fewer ulcers, less heart trouble.

BETTER INSTRUCTION is still another way to help our workers to greater job efficiency, and, through that to better physical and mental health. Job instruction stressing safety key points will pay you big dividends on any job. Regarding this, Jack Kern has this to say: "Training and developing ourselves by pursuing the open-mind policy offers real promise. The open mind to other's ideas and thinking can be the open door to progress in safety and job improvements - to increased teamwork. 'Brainstorming,' so to speak, has its genesis in full recognition of the other guy's thoughts. Surely this team approach can produce significant training opportunities and paralleling benefits to safety."

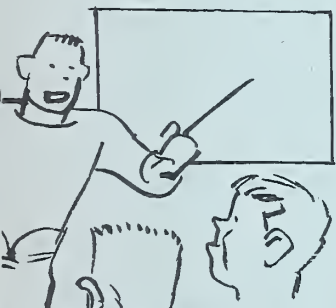


PLANNING

Well those are only two ways to MORE MODERATION in our work - to Safer, Saner, Safety - GREATER EFFICIENCY and BETTER JOB INSTRUCTION. How about those of us who are balls of fire, the eager beavers, the human dynamos who have a large amount of that spark called inner drive that spurs them relentlessly on to better and newer horizons? Our outfit probably has more than their share of these individuals. That's how they rose to the top level of management. I have found that we have them at all levels, including the workers on the crews. Many of them are taking a short cut to the cemetery, in their haste to get things done. Well, now, there's a tough problem to urge moderation on these birds.

I propose a two-fold approach to help them. First, BETTER PLANNING of their work and their time through Planned Work Area Protection - planning ahead on every job we do, trying to foresee and forestall all work hazards and injuries. Carrying this idea still further, let's urge our eager beavers to look ahead for health hazards along the road to success, whatever their jobs might be.

Top management will have to play a heavy - or should I say enlightened - hand here by easing up on work pressures where signs of strain are showing up. The discoveries of medical science are useless if they aren't applied.



EDUCATION

This brings up the second part of our two-fold approach to our eager beavers. This is one of the most important parts of my discussion, too. This consists of an EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM aimed to show all of our workers - and let's not forget their families, either - just how best to take care of themselves in these trying, modern times. Of course they can glean a lot of this in their newspapers and magazines. It won't do any harm, though, for all of our units to be more concerned about the foreman or administrator who is putting on too much weight. Some doctors tell us that's one of our greatest problems.

And that reminds me that you've reached middle age when your wife tells you to pull in your stomach - and you already have. You know what the big 4's of middle age are, don't you? Baldness, Bifocals, Bridgework and Bulge. And Bulge is the only one you can correct.



PHYSICALS

Cutting down on your bulge is only one item, though, out of many other practical down-to-earth health improvement ideas which our doctors can give us in language easily understood and easy to do - by all. Like this poem Dr. Melvin T. Johnson, chief of the USDA Division of Employee Health routed to me the other day:

Here's some advice that's hard to beat. Ulcers don't come from what you eat. Neither do they come from what you do. Ulcers come from what's eating you.

While speaking of doctors, let's not forget to urge our fellow workers to get ANNUAL PHYSICAL EXAMINATIONS. And how about requiring physicals of the people you're hiring? That's sure to be a life-saver for somebody. Physical examinations, yes. Did you hear about the man with a little black bag who knocked at the front door of a large dilapidated home. "Come in, come in," said the father of 14 children. "And I sure hope you're the piano tuner."

Yes, I'm convinced that the educational side of our employee health program needs some piano tuning - needs greater emphasis for the well-being and efficiency of the job as well as for worker health and job satisfaction.

At this point I want you to read a few lines written by Howard Whitman for Colliers: "A friend of mine has just committed suicide, but it didn't say so in the papers. The obituary said 'heart attack'. That was factually correct. But anyone who really knew Harry could be sure he dug his own grave. He dug so fast that he fell into it at forty-seven, instead of living another 20 years with his wife and kids. 'I wish I'd made Harry's money,' an old acquaintance said. 'He had everything to live for.'"

Actually, Harry had everything to die for. He had something gnawing at the inside of him that wouldn't let him rest. He was a hard driver. Where was he driving? Fran, his wife, used to say, until she was weary of saying it, 'Why don't you let down a little, Harry? Why don't you take time out - just a seventh-inning stretch, just an intermission - to enjoy life?' Harry's got a long time to stretch now. A very, very long intermission.

Unfortunately the human dynamo has become a popular, somewhat fashionable type. He boasts that he works 18 hours a day and hasn't had a vacation in six years - instead of being ashamed of such miserable facts. Why boast about abuse of the human mechanism? Should the man who runs his car 10,000 miles without changing the oil be proud of such stupidity? It takes a long time to make a man realize that, in addition to wrecking himself, he hasn't done his company any more good than if he'd taken a \$100,000 power crane and run it till the bearings smoked.

Good honest work, sensibly tackled, doesn't hurt anybody. It may cause fatigue, but it doesn't cause sickness. A man with a healthy attitude toward work stops automatically when he's had enough; he recharges his batteries. He plays."

One other point now, and let's make this the last one. You must be getting tired of reading. This is to let everybody know how they're doing - give CREDIT WHERE DUE - give a pat on the back here - a verbal commendation there. What better way can you think of to help your employees to higher morale, greater job satisfaction, better mental health on the job, than to let them know how they stand?

A quick summary, a challenge, then I'm through.

The Summary - get broader results and greater dividends with your safety program by including a generous share of employee health in them. Through this you will get higher morale, less turnover, more efficiency, fewer accidents.

The Challenge - Apply the 3-S formula - Safer, Saner Safety - to your job. Maybe you will be the winner.



CREDIT

Safer
Saner
Safety

